

The MRC-Tamiya

ROAD WIZARD

A 1/10 SCALE FORMULA ONE RACER

BY TOM KRAMER

Formula One has made an explosive return to R/C with the new Road Wizard from Tamiya. Complete with a two-part 1.5mm FRP chassis/frame, three-point suspension system with a balanced front suspension and a rear shock absorber that utilizes an adjustable single coil damper, as well as an adjustable front wing and under-cowl, the Road Wizard is an aerodynamic beauty.

The first thing I noticed about the kit upon receiving it was how small the package looked. Upon opening it my immediate reaction was "I've been shortchanged; this can't be the whole kit and kaboodle!" But sure enough everything was intact and, after taking a deep breath, I plunged into the work. And I didn't come up for air for two and a half hours.

IN THE GARAGE

The first step was to cement the tires, one of my least favorite activities because: a) I'm not that good at it; and b) I usually end up

with more glue on my hands than inside the tires. I did okay this time though. Step 2 is the cementing of the chassis, followed by the assembly of the gear case in step 3. The screws in 3, as well as in a few other steps were very difficult to screw all the way in and I warn you now, be careful that you don't strip them. Not that I did; of course not, but it could easily happen. As a matter of fact, this is one of the very few negative marks against the Wizard; the difficulty in applying the screws. (Maybe I should have let my wife do that job; just kidding honey). And there are hardly any spares to speak of, so make it count. I'm sorry, that's the way I feel.

Step 4 is easy. That's where you assemble the oil damper. In step 5 you attach the gear case; 6 and 7 deal with assembling the differential gear and attaching the rear shaft. Actually it's pretty basic stuff throughout so I won't bore you with a blow by blow, screw by screw description. Tamiya's blueprints speak louder than my words anyway. But



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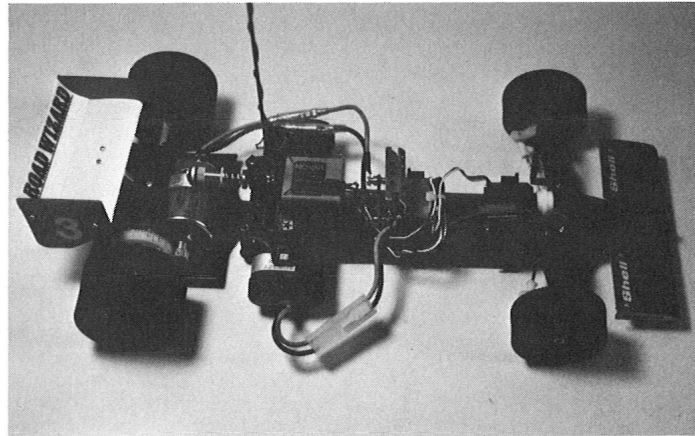


The kit: two lexan bodies, three sets of stickers, clear, well-illustrated instructions add up to a significant value for the money. This car could give 1/10 road racing a big lift.

ROAD WIZARD



Another of the three body paint schemes available in the Wizard kit. With two lexan bodies, you can race with one, use one for Concours.



Underneath, the setup is simple and neat. Novak speed control was added by author; kit supplies a lightweight, sliding wiper control.

I do want to talk about the speed controller. Pretty neat little thing. It's one of those lightweight, heavy-duty types with a sliding wiper, and good news for you moneysavers; when it burns out you don't have to chuck the whole thing. Just remove two tiny 2mm screws, slip off the old resistor and slip on the new. That's impressive.

It was in step 19 that I encountered problem number two. After attaching the servos to the chassis, they were still shifting about, as the holes in the chassis are larger than the screws. Granted, this is done on purpose so that you can adjust the servos to your liking... a little more to the right... no, let's go to the left; a good idea but Tamiya doesn't include washers to fit between the chassis and the servos. And they're needed. Actually it's no big deal, I just thought you oughta know. Just rummage through the ol' tool box and get 'em. They're there. I betcha.

Preparing the Road Wizard body to specs is a challenging job, and the most difficult aspect of the kit. But ever so rewarding when you complete it. To cut away the unnecessary parts of the body I used tin snips, scissors, and a modeling knife. I then

sprayed the entire body white, and then placed the line decals on the body. These should be the first decals you put on, as they give you the proper confines for painting the upper portion, and for applying the other decals. They are not easy to line up, and if you by chance do misalign them, you can VERY CAREFULLY lift up one end at a time and realign it. The color scheme surrounding the driver requires a steady hand and a nice sum of patience. I used Tamiya's own polycarbonate paint for the first time and was very impressed with the performance. It went on easily, adhered very well, and I found that I could get by with one coat. As usual, the decals from Tamiya are of a superb quality, and you get three types, including the Tamiya Original, the Williams Honda, and the JPS Lotus. Also included are two Lexan bodies. One for show, one for go.

PIT ROW

The equipment used to run the Wizard included two Futaba S32 servos accompanied by the Magnum transmitter, a Novak receiver, a Tamiya battery eliminator and the Tamiya Ni-Cd 7.2V Racing Pack. Two things to note. I think a lot of people are in the dark

when it comes to this battery. These Tamiya batteries, if you were to strip away the black covering, are actually Sanyo matched batteries. The cells are spot-welded together as opposed to soldered together, thus preventing heat buildup in the batteries, which means longer life and durability for you money savers out there. And the battery eliminator does just that: it eliminates the need for those obnoxious extra batteries. You have to purchase this separately, so make sure yours is compatible with your electronic gear. There is a choice of three BEC units.

THE CHECKERED FLAG

The Road Wizard is fast! It was very responsive, the road adhesion was excellent. I fiddled around with the adjustable wings and yes, the adjustments do make a difference in handling. I would recommend this car to beginners and experts alike, as it is basically simple to build, but once on the track it handles like a pro. There are enough features and there's enough fun involved to keep you outside till the cows come home. Or till the food's on the table. ●



The JPS Lotus paint scheme makes for a good-looking Formula One racer, which closely resembles prototype. Adjustable wings make a difference.